



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 22 October 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
22 OCTOBER 1968

1. Panama

Arias will arrive at Dulles International at about 8 o'clock this morning. He left the Canal Zone last night aboard a US military plane. The general strike which his supporters called on his behalf yesterday was far from successful; this probably caused Arias to give in.

Arias may still try to arouse his supporters by making inflammatory statements from outside the country, but the Guard has plenty of muscle to use against any troublemakers. Intensive violence in the capital, however, could easily spill over into the Zone.

2. Soviet Union

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3. Warsaw Pact -
Czechoslovakia

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[redacted] Hungarian and Polish press reports state that troops from these countries are [redacted] returning home.

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4. Czechoslovakia

Conservatives in the Czech party held a number of secret meetings throughout the country over the weekend. At one, some 400 Communist "veterans" passed a resolution requesting their district party organization to cooperate fully with the occupation forces. This was probably the procedure in many of the meetings.

Faced with Dubcek's capitulation, the resistance of the Czech press and radio is beginning to fade. All newspapers carried reports of the ratification of the status-of-forces agreement and a full text of the treaty without comment. Even the most outspoken publications are now considerably subdued.

5. Jordan

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Communists Anticipate More Air Strikes in Laos:
Communists anticipate that further restrictions on US bombings of North Vietnam will lead to increased air strikes against their forces in Laos. A warning to this effect was carried in a North Vietnamese rear services message of 20 October addressed to an engineer battalion and an antiaircraft battalion positioned in the Laos panhandle. The message stated that in the near future "the enemy may lower their activity in North Vietnam." In this event, said the message, "the enemy may concentrate their strikes on our positions."

The message underscores the Communists' concern for maintaining the flow of supplies through the Lao-tian corridor. In this connection, intercepted communications during the past week have shown increased difficulties because of bombing operations and flooding on Route 912, a main North Vietnamese road link with Laos.

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MK-36 Destructors Harass the North Vietnamese:
North Vietnamese messages over the past several weeks have given further evidence of the effectiveness of the MK-36 destructor. The messages have mentioned blocked rivers, impassable roads, and destroyed materiel. One message of 2 October refers to the building of "rafts to destroy magnetic bombs"; the very next day the same unit was "rebuilding rafts that had been destroyed by bombs." Aerial photography in mid-October disclosed what appeared to be a crude North Vietnamese sweeping rig--two oil drums towed by a sampan--on a stream near the Demilitarized Zone.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

Front on the US Campaign: The Front's radio scored the Vietnam views of the three US presidential candidates in a Vietnamese language broadcast on 19 October. The commentary claimed that the Vietnam programs of the candidates are insufficient to resolve the war or to ease the "crisis of confidence" of the American people caused by the Johnson administration's "aggressive war policy."

The broadcast denounced Vice President Humphrey's proposals as indistinguishable from those of the current administration, Mr. Nixon's as belligerent and aggressive, and Governor Wallace's as "brutal and stupid" and worthy of condemnation by American and world opinion.

The commentary, which was often couched in vitriolic terms, charged that the campaign's rhetoric concerning Vietnam had generated violent disputes and raging conflicts within high levels of the administration. This, coupled with the inadequacies of the candidates' positions and the developing antiwar movement in the US, has made the present campaign the tensest in US history, concluded Liberation Radio.

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